

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RURAL REVITALIZATION,
CONSERVATION, FORESTRY AND CREDIT

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, Subcommittee on Rural Revitalization, Conservation, Forestry and Credit, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 21, 2008 at 2:30 p.m. in room 332 of the Russell Senate office building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator DODD, I ask unanimous consent that LCDR Christopher Martin, a congressional fellow in Senator DODD's office, be allowed floor privileges for the duration of the debate on H.R. 2642.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Alissa Doobay of my staff be granted floor privileges for the duration of today's session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a fellow in my office, LCDR John Croghan, be granted the privilege of the floor for the remainder of the debate on the supplemental bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THANKING THE PRESIDING
OFFICER AND STAFF

Mr. REID. Mr. President, first of all, let me express my appreciation to you for your patience and, of course, all the staff. We have been trying to get where we are. It has been a long night. Hopefully, this is pointing us in the right direction.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—HOUSE MESSAGE ON H.R. 2642

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following any leader time on Thursday, May 22, the Senate then resume consideration of the House message on H.R. 2642, and there be 2 hours of debate equally divided and controlled between the leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the cloture motion with respect to the Reid motion to concur in House amendment No. 2 with an amendment be withdrawn, and the Reid second-degree amendment be withdrawn; that the Senate then proceed to vote on adoption of the motion to concur in House amendment No. 2 with an amendment; that the motion to concur be subject to an affirmative 60-vote threshold, that if the motion achieves that threshold, it be agreed

to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; that if the motion to concur fails to achieve 60 votes, it be withdrawn, and Senator REID be recognized to move to concur in House amendment No. 2 with an amendment which is the Webb GI bill; that the motion be subject to an affirmative 60-vote threshold; and that if it achieves that threshold, the motion to concur be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; that if it fails to achieve 60 affirmative votes, it be withdrawn, and the Senate disagree to House amendment No. 2; that upon disposition of House amendment No. 2, Senator REID be recognized to move to concur in House amendment No. 1 with an amendment which is the text of the committee-reported amendments Nos. 2 and 3 on funding and Iraq policy; that Senator SANDERS then be recognized to make a rule XVI point of order against section 11312 of the Reid motion; that if the point of order is sustained, Senator REID be recognized to move to concur in House amendment No. 1 with an amendment which is the text of committee amendments Nos. 2 and 3 minus section 11312; that it be subject to a 60 affirmative vote threshold, and that if it achieves that threshold, it be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; that if it fails to achieve the 60-vote threshold, it be withdrawn, and Senator REID be recognized to move to concur in House amendment No. 1 with an amendment which is the text of the committee amendment No. 2 minus section 11312; that the motion be subject to an affirmative 60-vote threshold; and that if the motion achieves that threshold, it be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; if it fails to achieve that threshold, then it be withdrawn, and the Senate disagree to House amendment No. 1; that no further points of order be in order, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Thank you, Mr. President, very much.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I would now note for everyone within the sound of my voice, we are still having some problems with the farm bill because of the enrolling not having been done, as we understand it, in the House. They failed to enroll one section of the 15 sections. But we are going to deal with that tomorrow in some detail. And because of that, we will have to hold up doing the budget until we try to work something out tomorrow or at some later time.

SUPPORTING HUMANITARIAN
ASSISTANCE IN SOMALIA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from consideration of S. Res. 541 and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 541) supporting humanitarian assistance, protection of civilians, accountability for abuses in Somalia, and urging concrete progress in line with the Transitional Federal Charter of Somalia toward the establishment of a viable government of national unity.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements related to this matter be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 541) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 541

Whereas, despite the formation of the internationally recognized Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2004, there has been little improvement in the governance or stability of southern and central Somalia, and stability in the northern region of Puntland has deteriorated;

Whereas governance failures in Somalia have permitted and contributed to escalating violence, egregious human rights abuses, and violations of international humanitarian law, which occur with impunity and have led to an independent system of roadblocks, checkpoints, and extortion that hinders trade, business, and the delivery of desperately needed humanitarian assistance;

Whereas the Government of Ethiopia intervened in Somalia in December 2006 against the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) and continues to serve as the primary security force for the TFG in Somalia;

Whereas a United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia report presented to the United Nations Security Council on July 20, 2007, alleged that Eritreans have provided arms to insurgents in Somalia as part of a long-standing dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea that includes a series of interlocking proxy wars in the Horn of Africa;

Whereas the United Nations estimates that, as of April 2008, 2,000,000 people in Somalia need humanitarian assistance or livelihood support for at least the next 6 months, including 745,000 people who have fled ongoing insecurity and sporadic violence in Mogadishu over the past 16 months, adding to more than 275,000 long-term internally displaced Somalis;

Whereas, despite Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein's public commitment to humanitarian operations, local and international aid agencies remain hindered by extortion, harassment, and administrative obstructions;

Whereas, in March 2008, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon presented his report on Somalia based on recent strategic assessments and fact-finding missions, which offered recommendations for increasing United Nations engagement while decreasing the presence of foreign troops, including the establishment of a maritime task force to deter piracy and support the 1992 international arms embargo;